

CURRENT NEWS **EARLY BIRD**

WEDNESDAY, May 6, 1998

USA Today

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One family wants to know, one doesn't

By Andrea Stone,
USA TODAY

Two families send sons to war. Two sons do not return.

The families of Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Blassie and Army Capt. Rodney Strobridge have lived with that loss since the two were shot down in separate aircraft near An Loc, South Vietnam, on May 11, 1972. The hurt was worse because the men were missing in action, their remains never brought home.

Like the families of 2,088 other MIAs from the Vietnam War, the Strobridges and the Blassies looked to the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery to represent their sons.

Now these two families are confronting an incredible possibility: that one of their sons rests in the hallowed Tomb. Defense Secretary William Cohen is being pressed by POW/MIA organizations to use new science on old evidence to find the truth. As he was deciding whether to open the tomb - a decision he could make as

early as this week - the Blassie and Strobridge families talked about how they feel about the heartache they are reliving.

Their stories are so similar, yet their feelings about the quest for an answer are very different.

Six years after Strobridge, a helicopter pilot, was listed as MIA, his family had him declared dead and held a memorial service. On the cover of the program was a photograph of the Tomb of the Unknowns. The image was not intended to be literal. It didn't occur to them that Rodney could be there.

The Blassies, on the other hand, are certain that Michael, an A-37 pilot lost in the same battle, is the Vietnam serviceman entombed on Memorial Day 1984. And they want the remains exhumed to prove it so they can finally take him home.

Physical evidence found near the remains, including an identification card that was later lost, points to Blassie, 24. But tests for blood type, age and height point to Strobridge, 30. The remains that went into

the Tomb were at one time labeled "believed to be" Michael Blassie. Back then there was no way to say for sure. The conflicting evidence caused the remains to be relabeled "unidentified." A Pentagon panel last week recommended breaking open the crypt at Arlington National Cemetery to determine, through DNA testing unavailable until recently, who is in it. Cohen is expected to approve exhuming the remains in time for the 26th anniversary of the men's death on Monday.

Other than that date, the two families share little except the place on Washington's Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall where the "E" at the end of Rodney Strobridge's name almost touches the "M" in Michael Blassie's.

Two points of view

The Blassie family - Michael's mother, Jean, three sisters and a brother - wants the Tomb opened. Led by Michael's sister, Pat Blassie, 39, who works as a publicist, they have given dozens of media interviews and set up an Inter-

net Web site. If Michael is in the Tomb, they say, they want his remains buried under his own headstone in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery near St. Louis. That's where his father, George, a World War II veteran who died in 1991, is buried.

"I just thought (the Tomb) would be a wonderful place for someone to be buried, but not if they're known," says Jean Blassie, who is in her 70s. She visited the Tomb in 1994 after a veterans newspaper first said her son might be interred there.

Strobridge's parents, who raised Rodney in Torrance, Calif., before they divorced when he was a teen-ager, say the Tomb should not be disturbed.

"When they go in that Tomb, there's no mystery anymore," says Althea, 79, a whodunit fan who isn't curious about this real-life mystery. "It represents your son to every MIA parent. I don't think it should be opened."

Rodney's father agrees. "I don't know what difference it makes, really. He's gone. You

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can't see him or have him anymore," says George Strobbridge, 78, who lives in Lake Isabella, Calif. "From what I'm hearing, they just got a few bones."

The four ribs, part of a pelvis and right upper arm bone have become a political hot potato. POW/MIA activists accuse the government of rushing to inter a Vietnam Unknown before all efforts at identification were exhausted. The controversy has forced the Pentagon to weigh the sanctity of the Tomb against the need to fully account for those still missing from Vietnam.

Mothers learn of loss

But for two mothers who each lost an eldest son, this transcends politics and symbolism. In interviews at Strobbridge's apartment across from a cornfield in rural Perry, Iowa, and Blassie's apartment in suburban Florissant, Mo., they spoke in purely personal terms. For them, the controversy has opened up the past and forced them to relive the day when each learned a piece of her future was gone.

A police officer brought the telegram to Althea Strobbridge's home on Mother's Day. She was numb, but not surprised. A few nights before, while working at an Iowa state hospital, she had seen Rodney's face - half his face, really - in a dark window, and she began to pray. That's when she saw Rodney and another soldier in a cockpit. "I could see flames," she recalls. Later, when the telegram arrived, her foreboding was "eased. It took a little bit of the coldness away."

Two Air Force officers came to the bank where Jean Blassie worked. "They said his plane was shot down," says Blassie. "My mind went blank."

One month later, a set of china dishes that Michael had ordered for his mother was delivered. Platters from the service for 12 are displayed in a hutch in Blassie's dining room.

In the weeks following Rodney's death, a birthday card Althea had sent - he would have turned 31 a few days after he died - was returned. In it, she had written of how "the newspapers are full of horrible news but I get out the coffee cup and as long as I don't see any bad signs, I sigh with relief and keep going. May the happy protective spirits be all around you and bring you safely home soon soon soon."

Althea, who wears Rodney's MIA bracelet, has kept that card. She has also kept four bullet casings from the 21-gun salute at his memorial service; his yearbook from Fort Bliss, Texas; and, of course, his medals.

"Now this is the Distinguished Flying Cross. They get it for valor above duty," she tells a visitor, holding up a small green case. "And this is the Silver Star. It's really kind of fancy."

Jean has the same medals. She also has scrapbooks of faded color photographs. Michael in the backyard with his sisters and brother. Michael on Santa's lap. Michael playing tennis. Michael graduating from the Air Force Academy.

Those are things that a mother can touch. But for Althea, memories of a "good kid" who babysat his little sister and brother, who was proud of his blue Corvette and who hoped to make a career out of flying helicopters - those are enough.

Warm memories are not enough for the Blassies. They yearn for cool marble engraved with Michael's name.

"It's a proper thing to have our loved one, to know how they died, to lay them to rest, have them buried and have a marker with his name on it," says Michael's brother, George, 37.

"I don't need it," says Althea, who says she'll nonetheless cooperate by giving a sample of her blood for DNA testing. "I feel he's around anyway." A couple of weeks ago she saw an eagle circle outside her window. "It could have been an angel," she says. "I think Rodney knows what's going on."

The Blassies are puzzled by Althea Strobbridge's lack of curiosity. But they say it makes sense given the evidence.

"It's not her son, that's why," says Jean Blassie. "If she thought it was her son she'd want him brought home, too."

Says George Strobbridge, a retired plumber: "They haven't got any deeper feelings for their son than I did. But we haven't got him now. How's (opening the Tomb) going to change anything?"

The Blassies are irked by the release of evidence suggesting Rodney Strobbridge is as likely to be in the Tomb as Michael.

The bones belonged to someone who was between 26 and 33 years old, according to the Pentagon panel. Blassie was only 24. Strobbridge was 30.

Bone size indicates that the person in the Tomb was between 5-feet-2-inches and 5-feet-11 1/2-inches tall. Strobbridge was 5-feet-9. Blassie, at about 6 feet, appears to have been too tall.

"My brother had short legs," says his sister, Mary Hart, 44.

Tests based on hair samples in flight-suit material found with the remains show a blood

type of O-negative, the same as Strobbridge's. Blassie's blood was type A-positive. The tests, conducted in the 1980s, are considered 67% reliable.

"Wasn't it just one hair?" asks another sister, Judy Cozad, 47. "It could have come off if someone else wore the flight suit or from somebody handling it."

Despite the contradictions, the most likely remains in the Tomb are Blassie's. Until 1980, they had been labeled "believed to be" his because they had been found with an ID card, parts of an ejection seat, a parachute and a life raft that are associated with the type of plane he was flying. But when the findings of forensic tests on the remains didn't match what was known about Blassie, they were reclassified "unidentifiable."

Now, they may be brought out for DNA testing. Whether emptying the Tomb leaves a void as gaping as that left by the Vietnam War itself is not clear. The military tradition of honoring an unknown soldier may not survive modern science.

The Pentagon says there are several more unidentified remains from Vietnam that could be placed in the Tomb. The families say it might be best just to leave it empty. They say perhaps a simple plaque for all the Vietnam unknowns would do.

Before Rodney Strobbridge left for his second tour in Vietnam, he told his wife, Patty, that if anything happened to him, he wanted to be buried at Arlington. After he disappeared in the fog of war, the government put a memorial marker there.

It is not far from the Tomb of the Unknowns.

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U.S. Gives Israel Deadline

White House Invitation Conditioned On Accepting Peace Proposal

By Barton Gellman
Washington Post
Staff Writer

LONDON, May 5—The Clinton administration committed itself today to a new course of diplomatic pressure on Israel, extending invitations to a

White House summit meeting Monday on condition that Israel accept a package of U.S. peace proposals it has rejected resolutely until now.

The invitations to Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, made public at a

news conference by Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, amounted to a six-day deadline for Netanyahu to dislodge himself from positions he described as recently as today as essential to Israel's security.

The declared purpose of the Washington summit, to be

hosted by President Clinton on May 11, would be to open the final chapter of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. The sides are now four years into a contemplated five-year working period intended to lead to permanent resolution of their conflict, and they are long past due to begin bargaining on such core issues as Palestinian statehood, borders, refugees and the status of Jerusalem.

Before they can begin that, Israelis and Palestinians must

break a 14-month stalemate on issues ostensibly solved by interim agreements in 1994 and 1995. The Clinton administration has drafted proposals combining new Palestinian security measures with Israeli troop withdrawals from an additional 13 percent of the West Bank, captured by Israel in 1967, but Netanyahu has argued he cannot safely relinquish that much land.

Albright's announcement followed failure of her mediating efforts here and two telephone conversations each with Clinton and Vice President Gore. It reflected a longstanding U.S. loss of patience with Netanyahu and a belief by policymakers that the peacemaking effort between Israelis and Palestinians is falling apart.

"We have a strategic opportunity to put the peace process back on track," Albright said. "We cannot afford to lose it."

Polite and even anodyne, Albright's performance avoided drama by design but broke substantial new ground. It marked the first public exhortation of progress that did not place equal onus on the parties, the first forthright statement that Arafat agreed to Washington's terms and Netanyahu did not, the first flat assertion that the American ideas "do not threaten Israeli security," and the first threat to "reexamine our approach to the peace process" if Israel does not come around.

U.S. officials had said some of this before in diplomatic contacts and comments made to reporters on condition of anonymity. But Netanyahu sought to deter any frank public statement of U.S. differences with his government by mobilizing American Jews, Christian fundamentalists and friends of Israel in Congress.

The Albright remarks signaled a hardening of U.S. proposals -- described euphemistically as "ideas" -- that have

been described by spokesmen until now as undergoing constant refinement.

"The invitation to the Washington meeting is on the basis of those ideas, and watering them down is not in the works," Albright said.

Confrontation with Israel, should Netanyahu decide to resist, could prove costly for Clinton and especially for Gore, who does not wish to alienate Jewish contributors or voters in his expected presidential campaign. Netanyahu has demonstrated often, most recently when British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook insisted on visiting the controversial Jewish housing development of Har Homa in southeast Jerusalem, that he knows how to embarrass foreign leaders who challenge him.

After hearing Albright's public remarks, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations sought an urgent conference call with the secretary of state, now scheduled for late Wednesday.

"If she wants to try to ratchet up the pressure [on Israel] it's not going to work," executive vice chairman Malcolm Hoenlein said in a telephone interview from New York. "When it comes to second guessing Israel on security you cross a very delicate line, and I think the administration understands that."

It was not yet clear, on the other hand, that Netanyahu will not find a way to accommodate Clinton. Albright sought to leave an opening by praising the "constructive and interesting ideas" she said Netanyahu had brought to the unsuccessful London talks.

"The prime minister wants this to work, but he is very aware of the tight range of maneuver that's dictated by his reading of our security interest and that of the Israeli army," said Dore Gold, Israel's U.N.

ambassador.

"We're not dealing with passes in the Sinai in 1975 which are dozens of kilometers from the borders of Israel," he added, invoking a comparison with the West Bank. "We're dealing with territory that is far more sensitive to the security of Israel, at the outskirts of our major cities."

Netanyahu, speaking here before Albright made her public remarks, said: "If I'm satisfied Israel's security is protected, then we can close the gaps."

One proposal explored in recent days by U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross would help the Israelis reach a 13 percent withdrawal by redefining what it means to withdraw. Under previous accords the West Bank is now divided into three categories: Area A, or full Palestinian control, covers 3 percent of the territory; Area B, where Israeli troops are no longer based but may return at will, covers 24 percent; and Area C, full Israeli control, covers the remaining 73 percent.

Netanyahu is said by diplomats to be interested in creating a "B-minus" or "C-plus" category, with nominal Palestinian authority and Israel's security forces firmly in place. But when the American delegation presented that idea to Palestinians for the first time today it was firmly rebuffed. U.S. officials declined to answer whether the American demand for a 13 percent withdrawal could be satisfied in part by such a hybrid.

Albright tried and failed Monday night to arrange a last-ditch joint meeting today with Arafat and Netanyahu. Arafat said he would come only on condition that Albright finally present the U.S. bridging proposal in writing, which the Americans say they are not yet prepared to do.

Arafat made clear, according to a longtime adviser, that he would accept the U.S. proposal on the spot -- if it were made. The Clinton administration worked hard to secure that acceptance, recruiting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and European leaders to help persuade Arafat.

Netanyahu made clear he would have rejected the U.S. plan as written. The Clinton administration has considered the benefits of orchestrating a public breach with him, using Arafat's acceptance as counterpoint, but Clinton reportedly is not yet ready to carry it out.

If Netanyahu declines the terms of the summons to Washington, Clinton will be under pressure himself by European and Persian Gulf allies to deliver the Israeli leader.

"We know what this means," an administration official said. "It's deadline time, and we're going to reevaluate and reexamine our role. Those are pretty strong words."

Late this afternoon, after Netanyahu and Arafat flew out of town, Ross and Assistant Secretary of State Martin Indyk huddled with Israeli negotiators Yitzhak Molcho and Dani Naveh. By late tonight they were still working, with no word on the results.

Jane's Defence Weekly
May 6, 1998

Israeli-US Talks Focus On Military Aid Boost

Ed Blanche, Beirut

Israel is negotiating with the Clinton administration to phase out the annual \$1.2 bil-

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lion in civilian aid it receives from the USA and boost the amount of military aid by one-third from \$1.8 billion to \$2.4 billion a year over the next 10 years.

Israeli Finance Minister Yaacov Neeman said that an agreement is expected following his visit to Washington this week.

The new aid programme would save the USA \$600 million a year, 20% of its current aid programme to Israel, while boosting Israel's defence spending as it begins a 10-year modernisation programme.

If an agreement is reached, it will antagonise the Arab world. Arab states, including Egypt, are becoming increasingly disenchanted with US policy in the region, which they see as heavily biased in Israel's favour. They question the reasons for Washington's commitment to bolstering Israel's military capabilities while pushing the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Since the 1979 signing of the US-brokered Camp David peace agreement with Egypt, Israel has been the largest beneficiary of US foreign aid

with \$3 billion annually. Cairo receives \$2.1 billion annually in civilian and military assistance. Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, who declared before the US Congress in 1996 that Israel wanted to lessen its dependence on US aid, began talks on phasing out civilian aid last January.

It is not clear whether an accord has been reached on Netanyahu's proposal to significantly change the conditions imposed on how the military aid is spent. Netanyahu wants to be able to spend 50% of it on

Israel's defence industry, rather than the current 25% ceiling.

Israel is the only US military aid recipient that is allowed to use a sizeable part of that aid for purchases from its own industry rather than from US manufacturers.

Martin Indyk, US assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs, who was in Jerusalem late last month, acknowledged that "Congress and the administration want the business to go to American companies so that's one that people should understand is very difficult for us".

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Congress Breaks Ranks On Mixing Sexes

By Steven Komarow,
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON - A House bill to separate the sexes during basic training is suddenly gaining support, over the objections of Navy, Army and Air Force leaders who say today's troops should work together

from the start.

"Congress is stepping up to its constitutional duty to help the military return to what works - single-sex units and housing," says Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md.

The House National Security Committee is expected today to include some restrictions on mixed-gender training in its annual defense bill. Approved in subcommittee 12-2, the new rules would:

Require the services to make basic training platoons all-male

or all-female by April 15, 1999.

House recruits in all-male or all-female barracks.

Men and women now train together, and in many cases live in adjoining wings. The Marines have never allowed mixed-sex training.

Congress has closely monitored mixed-sex training since misconduct came to light at the Aberdeen, Md., Army base 18 months ago. But, until now, it has deferred to military leaders who support the policy brought by President Clinton in 1993.

"It makes all the sense in the world to train as you will fight, train as you will live," said Navy spokesman Capt. Craig Quigley.

But a commission appointed by Defense Secretary William Cohen concluded in December that mixing the sexes distracted recruits. But Cohen rejected the recommendation to end all mixed-sex basic training.

Spokesman Kenneth Bacon says Cohen believes Congress should continue "to leave it up to the services."

Washington Post

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Pentagon Orders Base Contracting Reviewed

By Bradley Graham
Washington Post
Staff Writer

Defense Secretary William S. Cohen took the exceptional step yesterday of ordering the appointment of independent advisers to monitor a competition for work at a California air base slated for closure, amid congressional allegations of political meddling by the Clinton administration in the bidding process.

The acting secretary of the Air Force, F. Whitten Peters, also removed himself from deciding the competition. The actions followed disclosure last week of a memo from Peters reporting that John D. Podesta, the deputy White House chief of staff, wanted a top Pentagon official to press Bethesda's Lockheed Martin Corp. to bid on some of the maintenance business at McClellan Air

Force Base and keep the work in Sacramento.

"Mr. Peters felt it made some sense for him to do this, to remove himself as a target of criticism here, and also to remove any question about the bidding process," Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon told reporters. "The fact of the matter is that a process is going to be set up to make sure that this bidding is handled in the fairest possible way and that the contract is let in a squeaky-clean way."

While administration officials insist they did nothing wrong and simply were trying to ensure a vigorous competition, Republican lawmakers have seized on the memo as evidence that senior presidential aides are bent on manipulating the base closing process to curry favor in vote-rich California.

House Majority Leader

Richard K. Arney (R-Tex.), who had called for the resignations of Peters and Podesta, yesterday welcomed "Cohen's swift reaction to our concerns." Still, members predicted the measures would do little to ease strong congressional opposition to an administration request for additional rounds of base closures. Both the Senate and House defense committees are due to consider the request today during mark-up of 1999 authorization bills.

Among those leading the attack on the administration have been delegates from Utah, home of Hill Air Force Base, which is vying for some of McClellan's work. Noting yesterday that Utah politicians have themselves taken an active role in trying to shape the

competition, administration officials pointed to a Jan. 9 letter signed by Utah's governor, two senators and three House members to Michael Sears, a senior Boeing Co. executive.

The letter urged Boeing to team with Hill Air Force Base and bid on McClellan's business. Boeing eventually agreed.

"There's a difference," said a senior aide to Rep. James V. Hansen (R-Utah), arguing that the approach to Boeing cannot be equated with the Lockheed episode. "In one case, you have state political leaders encouraging a possible partner to join in a free and open competition. In the other, you have the people who are responsible for running the competition trying to influence it."

Marines Not Reckless In Cable Car Accident, Lawyer Says

By Steve Vogel
Washington Post
Staff Writer

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C., May 5—The crew of a Marine Corps jet that severed a cable car wire in the Italian Alps, sending 20 people to their deaths, was not trying to join any "cable car club" by flying recklessly low and fast on a mountain training mission, an attorney for one of the men said today at the start of a military hearing into the case.

In an opening statement, Capt. Paul Kaplan, a Marine Corps defense attorney, rejected what he said would be claims by government prosecutors that the crew was "flat-hatting, cowboying or goofing around." Flat-hatting is military slang for flying for thrills at low altitude and high speed.

Prosecutors, however, did not allege the existence of a "cable car club" or address other possible motives for the flight pattern in presenting their first day of testimony. The prosecution made no opening statement today but focused its questioning on the speed and altitude at which the crew was flying the EA-6B Prowler.

The hearing that began today examines the actions of the two electronic jamming officers sitting in the back of the jet, Capt. William L. Raney II, 26, of Englewood, Colo., and Capt. Chandler P. Seagraves, 28, of Nineveh, Ind. At the request of defense attorneys, the pilot of the aircraft, Capt.

Richard Ashby, and the navigator, Capt. Joseph Schweitzer, face a separate hearing scheduled for June 15.

The hearings, known as an Article 32, are a military procedure to determine whether the officers should be court-martialed. The officer hearing the case, Lt. Col. Ronald L. Rogers, will make a recommendation to Lt. Gen. Peter Pace, commander of the Marines in the Atlantic.

Pace has already issued a statement supporting the results of a Marine investigation that concluded that the crew was flying "aggressively" and that the accident occurred because the jet was flying too low and too fast.

All four officers are charged with involuntary manslaughter, negligent homicide, dereliction of duty, destruction of military property and destroying civilian property. If convicted, each faces over 200 years in prison.

Attorneys for Seagraves and Raney argued that, as backseaters, the two had no control over the plane and could not even see from their seats what lay in front of the aircraft.

The prosecution maintained that the entire crew had responsibility for the flight.

New details emerged about the Feb. 3 accident during today's hearing, including witnesses' accounts of the shock the crew members displayed after the accident.

The collision occurred during a low-altitude training run from Aviano Air Base in northern Italy, where the aviators'

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squadron was temporarily based in support of NATO's Bosnia operations. According to testimony from several squadron officers, the crew had no inkling of a problem until an instant before the collision.

"I felt I was at 1,000 feet, right where I needed to be," Ashby allegedly told Maj. Kirk Shawhan, the squadron operations officer, after the accident, according to Shawhan's testimony. The pilot said he suddenly saw a cable dead ahead that looked as if it would "cut his head off," Shawhan said.

Ashby told Shawhan that he "put his stick as far forward as it would go" to avoid the cable, Shawhan said.

"They thought they had missed the wire, and then they felt a tug and knew they had hit something," said Lt. Col. Richard Muegge, the squadron commander.

After the impact, Seagraves thought the plane had hit a bird. "He was scared at that point and had one hand on the ejection lever," Kaplan said.

After landing the badly damaged jet, the crew rushed to the squadron's ready room.

"They appeared to be in quite a state of shock," said Capt. Michael Recce, the operations duty officer that day. "None of them had any color in their faces."

Schweitzer, the navigator, reported that the plane had hit something, according to Shawhan. "Over his right shoulder, he might have seen a yellow flash of a gondola,"

Shawhan said. "He was extremely distraught and wanted immediate information. . . . He was concerned people were hurt."

All 20 persons inside the cable car -- including tourists from Italy, Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Austria -- plunged more than 300 feet to their death. The accident seriously strained U.S. relations with Italy, a NATO ally, prompting some politicians in that country to call for the withdrawal of American forces.

Kaplan described Seagraves as a "professional, conscientious" air crew member who would not have tolerated hot-dogging. "If Captain Seagraves had seen something wrong, he would have spoken up," said Kaplan.

Kaplan said Seagraves was "sorrowful" about the 20 people killed. "He would give his life to get them back," he said.

Marine Corps investigators concluded that the jet was flying at 300 to 400 feet above the ground when it sliced the cable wire, well below the authorized altitude of 2,000 feet. They also established that the aircraft was traveling close to its maximum speed of 541 knots per hour, well over the limit of 450 knots per hour.

Defense attorneys said at a news conference last month that the charges against the officers were based on "political pressures" and that the Marine investigation was conducted too hastily.

European Stars & Stripes

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Pentagon Moving Slowly On Gun Law

By Amee Seabolt
Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon's slow approach in executing a law aimed at taking firearms away from convicted spouse abusers is unconscionable, the law's sponsor says.

"The law took effect 1½ years ago and most federal agencies have made steady progress in seeing that it is effectively enforced among fed-

eral law enforcement officers," Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., said in a recent statement.

"Unfortunately, the evidence shows that the Department of Defense has not followed through with effective enforcement of the law," Lautenberg issued the statement in response to questions from The Stars and Stripes.

Army Lt. Col. Tom Begines, a Pentagon spokesman, noted how complex the issue is and

said that "the military services have taken preliminary steps to ensure that commanders in the field are not issuing weapons and ammunition to service-members with qualifying convictions."

The law denies anyone who has been convicted of misdemeanor spouse abuse from having a personal or military-issued firearm. The law also makes it a felony for convicted abusers to ship, transport or

receive firearms or ammunition, including military members.

Since President Clinton signed the law Sept. 30, 1996, the Pentagon has been at an impasse on how to implement it, officials said. In October, the Pentagon approved an interim policy that calls for troops with such convictions to be immediately transferred to administrative desk jobs until a permanent policy is hammered out.

In November, a 20-person joint service group led by Frank Rush, acting assistant secretary

of defense for force management policy, began tackling the issue. It had a deadline for reporting to Defense Secretary William Cohen on Jan. 15.

Pentagon officials estimate that the number of troops affected ranges from the high hundreds to low thousands. To determine the number, the working group is charged with sending out voluntary surveys asking the 1.4 million active-duty troops if they had such convictions.

"The services, however, raised several complex issues concerning how members were to be screened for convictions," Begines said. "Several complex

legal issues, however, still need to be resolved. We anticipate resolution soon."

So far, Air Force officials said survey mailings to their airmen have not been completed, and they did not know when they would be.

Army officials said unit commanders have reviewed troop records for previous spouse abuse convictions.

"The unit file checks did identify a relatively small number of soldiers with misdemeanor convictions," said an Army official who asked not to be identified. "The Army does not have any reliable indicators

that could accurately predict the Army-wide impact of the Lautenberg amendment."

Army officials said they expect to know how many soldiers will be affected by July.

Navy officials declined to comment on their progress.

According to previous research, 18.7 servicemembers per 1,000 have reported spouse-abuse charges that have been substantiated, Pentagon officials said. Such abuse cases include assault, battery and even emotional maltreatment, Pentagon officials said.

Lautenberg said he is dismayed by the Pentagon.

"If the department has legitimate problems in enforcing the law it should come to me and other lawmakers to help clear away the obstacles," he said. "We are here to make the law work."

Begines said Pentagon officials have discussed the possibility of developing a legislative proposal to modify the impact of the law. However, he said, no proposals have been submitted.

Lautenberg said every day that goes by is another day when spouses and children are in danger of being injured by a family member who is armed by the U.S. government.

Washington Times

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West Point lets senior cadet graduate after annulment

By Rowan Scarborough
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

In a break with tradition, West Point is allowing a senior cadet to graduate this month even though he married another senior who became pregnant, in violation of school policy.

The senior skirted the regulation by getting a quick annulment after the officers' school began investigating the couple. School officials said this is the first case in which a cadet avoided dismissal under the marriage ban by obtaining an annulment. They acknowledged other cadets could duplicate the process if caught being married.

"In the eyes of the law an annulment means that a marriage never took place," said Col. Bill Harke, an academy spokesman. "Therefore, we would have been on shaky legal ground if we had tried to separate him. During the investigation, they got an annulment."

Army sources said the female cadet involved in the case will be allowed to graduate after having the child, as long as she is not the child's legal custodian. The service academies bar students from having spousal or child dependents.

Some alumni are furious, seeing the affair as a case of lowering standards at the 196-year-old school. They note that the couple only sought the annulment after they realized the Army was investigating the violation of West Point's rules.

"How many violations/infractions of rules regulations?" asked a 1957 graduate on the Forum, a restricted Web site for West Point alumni. "Who gets the prize(s) for

wrongheadedness?"

Wrote another alumni, "Have the rules changed this much? I really can't believe this."

West Point regulations, as well as rules at the Air Force and Naval academies, state that officer trainees may not be married. The prohibition is designed to ensure students focus on the rigorous, four-year curriculum, and not be distracted by family obligations.

At one time, the Army academy required cadets to periodically attest in writing that they weren't married. This allowed the school to expel married cadets for lying and violating the honor code. West Point no longer requires the no-marriage pledge.

One graduate wrote in the alumni Web site that West Point offered the seniors a deal: get an annulment and you can graduate.

Col. Harke denied that happened. He said the couple ended the marriage on their own. "No deal was cut," he said.

He declined to release the cadets' names.

The school's decision comes as some retired and active duty graduates complain that West Point has lowered physical fitness standards and is sending less fit second lieutenants to operational units.

In 1996, the Army turned to a battle-hardened officer, Col. James Hallums, to head its department of behavioral sciences and leadership. But Col. Hallums — one of those now weighing in on the West Point Forum — was dismissed after colleagues complained he was overbearing. His allies claimed the institution bowed to political correctness.

Robert Maginnis, a 1973 West Point graduate and analyst at the Family Research Council, said his alma mater is setting a bad precedent.

"The message to other cadets is: as long as you make good grades, it doesn't matter that you break the regulations," Mr. Maginnis said, noting that West Point alumni such as Robert E. Lee and Dwight Eisenhower once "set the standard for the Army. So much for Army values."

The school's marriage ban states, "Any cadet who is married prior to graduation, or who has custody of a child or incurs a legal obligation to support a child prior to graduation shall be separated from the military academy."

In response to questions submitted by The Washington Times, a West Point statement said, "During the course of the required investigation to determine whether they should be separated under academy regulations, the couple obtained an annulment to that marriage. There is no prohibition concerning cadets who have annulled marriages, and the two cadets are currently members of the Corps of Cadets."

West Point accepted its first women cadets in 1976. Of 3,988 cadets, 572 are women.

Wall Street Journal

May 6, 1998

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A former Russian privatization chief was charged with illegally obtaining a Moscow apartment in 1993. The case against Alfred Kokh is being viewed as an anticorruption warning by Yeltsin to the members of his new government.

House Panel Taps Nearly \$400 Million From Energy Programs To Buy Weapons

Legi-Slate

May 5, 1998

By Richard H.P. Sia
LEGI-SLATE News Service

WASHINGTON (May 5) -- Declaring that a proposed \$48.7 billion budget for weapons purchases is not enough to meet U.S. military needs, a House National Security panel agreed Tuesday to bolster it with a \$377 million cash infusion from a nuclear stockpile testing and safety program.

The idea of tapping a nuclear weapons program for extra cash to buy conventional weapons and ammunition had a certain post-Cold War appeal to Republicans and Democrats alike on the Subcommittee on Procurement. But the concept upset senior Clinton administration officials, who warned against cutbacks in the Energy Department's so-called stockpile stewardship program.

"The reductions under consideration by your committee in Stockpile Stewardship will have a real and dramatic impact on our ability to continue to certify the stockpile and maintain our strategic nuclear deterrent," Energy Secretary Federico Pena wrote to National Security Committee Chairman Floyd Spence, R-S.C.

The transfer is part of a strategy by the Procurement Subcommittee to identify what aides called "bill payers" among existing defense-related programs that can pay for legislative add-ons -- items not in President Clinton's fiscal year 1999 defense budget request.

Another transfer would divert \$19 million from the Energy Department's Chemical and Biological Nonproliferation Program for defense needs. This program focuses on delivering technology to domestic "first responders" -- police, fire and emergency units, according to Energy officials.

Overall, the House panel, meeting in a closed-door session to draft its portion of the Fiscal 1999 defense authorization bill [H.R. 3616], agreed to add at least \$250 million to the president's requested defense procurement budget of \$48.7 billion, subcommittee sources

said.

It was not immediately disclosed how the nearly \$400 million in Energy Department transfers would be allocated among various defense procurement accounts.

The full National Security Committee is expected to vote on the bill Wednesday.

"Clearly we have a serious top-line deficiency," Rep. Norm Sisisky, D-Va., said before the subcommittee voted unanimously to close the meeting. About the panel's addition of \$250 million in procurement spending, Sisisky said flatly, "It's not enough."

Subcommittee Chairman Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., disclosed that the add-ons included money to help deal with "a shortage of basic ammunition" in the Marines, which he said needed \$193 million, and in the Army, which Hunter said projects a \$1.6 billion shortfall in its ammunition account. The actual amount of money added by the panel to the ammunition accounts was not disclosed.

The chairman also proposed adding \$80 million for "upgrades for the current bomber system," and language requiring that the Clinton administration "come up with a long-range bomber plan." These provisions are intended to address the absence of any additional purchases of B-2 Stealth bombers in the fiscal 1999 procurement request, Hunter said.

The B-2 is "important in terms of projecting American power on short notice and ... to stop enemy armor," Hunter said. But a report last month by the Pentagon's Long-Range Air Power Review Panel indicated that the "production line is gone, the vendors are no longer there," he explained.

"We can't rely on B-52s to fly for 80 years," added Hunter, referring to the oldest bombers in the U.S. fleet.

Hunter acknowledged that last year's balanced budget agreement prevented the panel from authorizing significant increases in military procurement spending. At the same time, Hunter said he had to find

a way to pay for the ammunition and bomber initiatives and deal with \$6 billion in add-ons requested by lawmakers and the military services themselves.

"Since we have no extra money ... we've had to shape the budget and look for areas where we might find some money," Hunter told his subcommittee.

So lawmakers, some of them reluctantly, agreed to take a reduction in the Navy F/A-18E/F aircraft program, which Hunter said would reduce the planned purchase of 30 planes in fiscal 1999 to 27. The administration originally requested \$3.015 billion for the 30 planes.

"We think it's a rational, responsible reduction, a balanced reduction," Hunter said.

An aide familiar with the F/A-18 discussions said he was not surprised the panel developed a consensus on the reduction. A cut of three planes "is not seen as devastating to the program," said the aide, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

All other tactical aircraft programs -- including the Air Force's F-22, which is going into production, despite what the General Accounting Office and others say is insufficient testing -- were fully funded at the requested levels, the aide said.

The transfer of \$377 million from the nuclear Stockpile Stewardship program brought an expression of concern from Rep. John Spratt, D-S.C., during the open portion of the meeting, prompting Hunter to assert that the subcommittee was prepared to "fully fund every program" in the Energy Department's weapons budget "in light of constraints."

In exchange, Hunter said, the panel would force the Energy Department to adopt a bookkeeping change recommended by the GAO that would reduce the stockpile program's anticipated excess or carry-over balance from the current fiscal year from 15 percent to 12 percent.

Hunter contended that this

change would help the military meet pressing procurement needs without hurting the stockpile program, which Energy officials describe as the government's principal means of maintaining the safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile, without nuclear testing. "Some money from the carry-over balance has been given to the Marines and Army for ammunition," Hunter said.

But, he added, "we hope the GAO's right."

In his letter to committee Chairman Spence, Energy Secretary Pena faulted the GAO analysis of the carry-over balance in the stockpile program, saying, "we will not have excess balances at the end of this year."

"Thus, any reductions for FY 99 must come from the Stockpile Stewardship program," Pena said.

Similar appeals were sent to the National Security Committee by Air Force Gen. Eugene E. Habiger, commander-in-chief of U.S. strategic forces, and Defense Secretary William S. Cohen.

"I am charged with reporting on my confidence in the safety and reliability of the stockpile as part of an annual certification process directed by the president," General Habiger wrote. "This job is made more difficult without nuclear testing, but the experts testify that they are confident they can do the job provided the promised tools of the science-based Stockpile Stewardship program are delivered on schedule."

Hunter took several swipes at the White House, criticizing the administration for failing to keep a pledge made in 1995 to boost procurement spending to \$60 billion in fiscal 1999.

"One of the duties we owe [the military] is to give them the best, but over the last couple of years, we've not been able to do that," he said, tossing aside assertions by Rep. Spratt that the Clinton budget meets the level set for defense by the balanced budget agreement.

"We've attempted to address a number of shortfalls that we

saw [in the procurement accounts], that the services saw," Hunter added. "Over five years, they need, they want \$55 billion worth of equipment, ammunition and platforms. So we're \$55 billion short."

Also during the open portion of the meeting, Rep. Jim R. Ryun, R-Kan., told subcommittee members that he intended to offer legislation -- and possibly an amendment to the defense authorization bill -- that would block any transfer of U.S. satellite technology to China under a "cooperative space agreement" that report-

edly is being negotiated in anticipation of President Clinton's visit to Beijing in June.

Ryun said any such technology transfer would ultimately help the Chinese develop strategic missiles at a time when House lawmakers are pushing the Clinton administration for deployment of effective missile defenses.

Hunter alerted Ryun that Chairman Spence "is working with the House leadership" on a strategy to prevent technology transfers to China that would compromise U.S. national security.

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot

May 6, 1998

The Ike, Returning Today, Will Stay In Port Until June 10, Navy Says

NORFOLK -- The carrier Dwight D. Eisenhower, scheduled to leave Norfolk on May 13 for its deployment in the Persian Gulf, will instead remain in port until June 10, the Navy said Tuesday.

The ship will return from more than a week of exercises today. Many of the ship's 5,000 or so sailors and aviators, expecting to leave Norfolk at the

end of April, had tied up loose ends here and will have nowhere to stay but on the ship.

Navy officials, reporting the update at 7 p.m. on the ship's Care Line for Navy families, said they did not know when the ship's deployment would end.

For more information, call the Care Line at 463-7918.

Defense Daily

May 6, 1998

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Pentagon Needs To Reassess FMS System, Hamre Says

By Vago Muradian

The Pentagon needs to update its cumbersome foreign military sale (FMS) system to make it more responsive to the needs of international customers and should work with industry in developing a new process that may even allow industry to oversee such deals, according to Deputy Defense Secretary John Hamre.

"We need to step back in a very significant way as a department and with industry really start thinking again from scratch," Hamre yesterday told an audience at an American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics luncheon in Arlington, Va. "Our process today is still very much a Cold War restrictive mindset...Frankly, we ought to open up our thinking and say maybe there are new institutional arrangements for foreign military sales. For example, it's not at all clear to me that we can't contract out the entire process... I think that all ought to be on the table."

The Defense Security Assistance Agency, which is charged with overseeing FMS deals, has started reviewing the current process, Hamre said, adding: "[That] we ought to be doing that joint with industry. I think we will try and find a venue to do that in the next couple of months so we can take a very fresh look at the process."

A "hybrid" process could be derived by pulling FMS strengths from both government and industry, he said.

Hamre stressed, however, that the review of the FMS process remains separate from questions regarding whether arms deals are a proper vehicle for U.S. national security and foreign policy.

"We're talking about the mechanics of how we're going to do it, but not addressing the issues about whether or not we should be treating foreign military sales as an instrument of foreign policy," Hamre said. "That is a much broader debate, a healthy debate we ought to have, but that's not what we are talking about here."

Hamre said that the United States owes it to customer nations to develop a more responsive system because "it's their money after all; they really deserve a stronger role in [the] system." He added that many customer nations question U.S. policies regarding the "release of technical information" as well as "how we price things."

Hamre is not alone in labeling the FMS system as ponderous and unresponsive, with negative implications for industry. Louis Giuliano, the president and CEO of ITT Defense & Electronics [IIN], told an audience at an AIAA panel on acquisition reform that in the best case--assuming Congress does not object to a deal--international customers must wait at least 15 months before they can take delivery of whatever they have ordered.

Hamre added that the need for a new FMS system is becoming increasingly apparent as the United States seeks international partners on large development efforts.

"As we start discussing issues of very large and new procurements, like the Joint Strike Fighter, you get to very tough questions about partnering and access to sensitive information," Hamre said.

The FMS issue was one of a number of topics that Hamre discussed during address, ranging from industry consolidation and the government's recent opposition to the proposed merger between Lockheed Martin [LMT] and Northrop Grumman [NOC] to acquisition reform to the need for more base closures.

Although the Justice Department--at the recommendation of the Defense Department--has filed suit in federal court asking that the Lockheed Martin-Northrop Grumman merger be blocked, the Pentagon remains interested in further consolidation of the defense industry, particularly at the second and third tiers, Hamre said.

"Are we still interested in mergers? The answer is yes, we certainly are," Hamre said. "We still would like to see merger and consolidation in the industry where it makes sense."

He stressed that the Pentagon's policies toward mergers and acquisitions remains unchanged, that DoD will continue to support such deals, and underwrite their cost to a degree, "so long as there is a positive return to the department--positive measurable return to the department--and so long as it doesn't unduly restrain competition in our view."

This is exactly where the Lockheed Martin-Northrop Grumman deal ran afoul.

"This was a very tough one," Hamre said. "There were some obvious issues associated with horizontal concentration...but I don't

believe that was the real cause of the problem. I think the larger problem was how do we understand and work through the issues of vertical consolidation. Here we had just a profound disagreement. It wasn't a disagreeable exchange; I have always admired the people who have been involved in this long enough because of previous dealings, and always will, but it is a very different world view that we have about whether the behavioral solutions will work in this area."

"And there is no question that there were ways we could accommodate vertical consolidation," Hamre added. "There was little question as to whether we could make it work, but would it take the department in a new direction."

The new direction that DoD wanted to avoid was more closely overseeing defense companies because doing so would have been antithetical to its wider acquisition reform goals to reduce oversight of industry.

"We felt that would have been taking us, frankly, in the wrong path compared to where we want to go with the latest acquisition reform," Hamre said. "[It] really was a very hard decision, that is to say, would we or would we not favor this consolidation, ultimately we didn't because it wasn't in the department's best interest. Our preference frankly is to continue to have two strong, independent companies, but we don't want that to be interpreted, and I don't want to be interpreted that to mean we are not interested in new consolidations."

As for international consolidation, such deals are inevitable, Hamre said. Although he declined to discuss the proposed acquisition of Tracor [TTRR] by Britain's GEC because the transaction is still under review, Hamre added that there remain "structural impediments" to striking large-scale transnational deals.

"When you are talking about mergers that cross national lines there is going to be a lot of tough thinking," Hamre said. "I don't know if we have put in place the intellectual underpinnings for this discussion."

Richmond Times Dispatch

May 6, 1998

Pg. 4

Pilots told not to engage Iraqis

'No fly' zone orders draw complaints

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — U.S. pilots patrolling southern Iraq last fall were repeatedly ordered by their commanders to retreat from Iraqi warplanes intruding into prohibited airspace. The Iraqis, one pilot complains, "were just taunting us."

U.S. officials acknowledge Air Force, Navy and allied pilots were

pulled back. American commanders initially calculated that the intrusions into "no-fly" areas were not directed at U.S. forces and later concluded the Iraqis were trying to lure U.S. warplanes over antiaircraft missile batteries, one official said.

To avoid a trap, U.S. pilots were restrained from taking action, even though they greatly outnumbered the intruders.

Just days after the incursions, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein touched off an international crisis by threatening to shoot down U.S. spy planes.

"Yes, we did back away," said Air Force Maj. Gen. Roger Radcliff, who commanded the operation at the time. "After a period of days, we adjusted that stance. But we never gave up the no-fly zone."

Some Air Force pilots who flew the missions in the no-fly zone in southern Iraq, where the United Nations since 1992 has barred Iraqi military flights, expressed exasperation.

"The Air Force leadership that was running the war in Southwest Asia was so conservative they never

let us get in a position where we could engage," Capt. Chris Prusak, an F-15 pilot, told The Associated Press.

Air Force Lt. Mark Reents, another F-15 pilot, said: "We were initially pushed 90 miles to the south" by his military commander to avoid a clash with Iraqis. After several days of violations, "incrementally, we were allowed to move north," he said.

Both pilots continue to fly F-15s for the Air Force's First Fighter Wing based at Langley Air Force Base, Va.

Iraq began the series of incursions into the no-fly zone last Sept. 29, sending small numbers of MiG-25 and other fighters into the prohibited area daily. Those flights stopped on Oct. 7.

Three weeks later, Saddam threatened to shoot down U.S. reconnaissance planes and demanded that U.S. officials no longer participate in international weapons inspections.

Whether the policy of restraint emboldened Saddam remains open to speculation.

Washington Post

May 6, 1998

Pg. 4

GOP Says U.S. Gave China Nuclear Edge

Donations, Satellite Transfer Policy Linked

By Juliet Eilperin
Washington Post
Staff Writer

Congressional Republicans plan a series of hearings to investigate whether President Clinton's policy on the export of commercial satellites to

China has allowed the Chinese to acquire technology to improve the accuracy of their nuclear missiles, according to GOP lawmakers and aides.

The hearings will focus on Clinton's decisions to allow two U.S. aerospace companies, Loral Space and Communica-

tions Ltd. and Hughes Electronic Corp., to export satellites to be launched atop Chinese rockets. The Justice Department has been investigating a report that Loral improperly gave China advice to upgrade the guidance systems on its rockets after a failed launch in

1996 destroyed a Loral satellite.

Both House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Senate Majority Trent Lott (R-Miss.) have taken an active interest in the congressional probes, in part because the aerospace firms have been major contributors to the Democratic Party. Loral's chief executive officer, Bernard L. Schwartz, was the single largest donor to

the Democratic Party in 1996.

Republican lawmakers are attempting to find a link between the financial contributions and a decision by Clinton earlier this year that they say effectively undercut the criminal investigation of Loral. The decision allowed Loral to launch another satellite and to provide China with the same type of information that was the subject of the Justice Department inquiry.

White House officials have denied any political influence on satellite policy, which they say has limited weapons proliferation by encouraging commercial cooperation with China dating back to the 1980s.

"Our policy specifically excludes the transfer of sensitive U.S. technology," said National Security Council spokesman P.J. Crowley. "We believe there are adequate safeguards in place that preclude U.S. companies from providing assistance to China with respect to the design, development, operation, maintenance, modification, or repair of launch vehicles."

Though House Republicans and Democrats have sparred on campaign finance issues in recent days, senior GOP members regard the allegations surrounding the satellite policy and China as the most potentially explosive issue this year. After months of investigating contributions to the Democratic Party, Republicans said, the incident may illustrate how corporate donations shaped the administration's policy in a way that threatens U.S. security.

The issue stems from the desire of U.S. space firms to

save time and money by launching their satellites on Chinese rockets. Under sanctions imposed after the 1989 anti-democracy crackdown in Tiananmen Square, Presidents Clinton and George Bush have issued waivers for firms to export satellites under strict guidelines designed to safeguard U.S. technology.

After Hughes and Loral received an export waiver in 1996, China launched a \$200 million Loral satellite on a rocket that crashed. Subsequently, scientists from the two companies advised China on how to improve its guidance systems for future launches. According to a secret May 1997 Pentagon report, first disclosed by the New York Times last month, this advice also strengthened China's nuclear capability. The Pentagon report concluded that "United States national security has been harmed" by the exchange, the article said.

A Justice Department investigation sparked by the Pentagon report is still ongoing. But Clinton's decision in February to approve the export of another Loral satellite to China, and permitting the kind of advice that is reportedly at the heart of the Justice Department's investigation, effectively deflated the probe, according to critics.

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.), who chairs the House Science subcommittee on space and aeronautics, said that he has been authorized by Gingrich to take the lead in the congressional investigation. He charged in a speech on the floor Thursday night that "President Clinton and his ad-

ministration have been doing everything they can to quash the investigation of this possible violation of law, this betrayal of our country."

Gingrich "is very focused on this issue," Rohrabacher added in an interview. "He believes it's going to emerge as an issue far more important than any White House sex scandals. It's embarrassing to talk about a sex scandal. There's nothing embarrassing about calling the president to task about the giveaway of American technology to the Red Chinese."

Rep. Richard K. Armey (R-Tex.) said at his weekly press briefing, "We now have revelations that we had special dispensation given to a defense contractor to sell to the Chinese the technology that would enable them to effectively target their nuclear weapons to the United States."

Armey added, "This is a matter of consequence when that contractor is a substantial contributor to the Democratic Party. These things need to be investigated and people need to come through."

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Schwartz gave \$632,000 in "soft money" donations in the 1995-96 cycle and another \$421,000 in the current electoral cycle, nearly all of which went to Democrats.

Loral has denied any wrongdoing in connection with the case.

"Our employees acted in good faith. The company initiated an independent examination of the incident and concluded that there was no violation of the export control laws," said Thomas B. Ross, vice

president of government relations at Loral. "We shared the results with the State Department and have fully cooperated with the government."

Both the Senate and House investigations would span a swath of committees. In late April, Gingrich met with chairmen of the House International Relations, National Security, and intelligence committees, while Lott met with members of Senate panels, including Governmental Affairs and Foreign Relations.

"This is a national security issue, and it has to be cleared up in the next couple weeks," Gingrich said yesterday, adding that it would be "absolutely intolerable" if Clinton's satellite policy were changed to reward a donor.

House and Senate investigators have asked the administration to hand over information concerning the waivers. On May 20, the Senate Governmental Affairs subcommittee on international security, proliferation and federation services will hold a hearing on how commercial satellite transfers can benefit long-range missile programs.

The distinction between commercial and military satellites is important, because different rules govern the exports of the two technologies. Clinton eased the way for the export of satellite technology when he delegated most of the administration's licensing duties from the State Department to the Commerce Department, which promotes the sale of U.S. products abroad, a move now criticized by Republicans.

Washington Times

May 6, 1998

Pg. 11

China angered by Indian defense minister

Warns that remarks threaten relations

BEIJING (Reuters) — China yesterday expressed "utmost regret and resentment" at comments by India's defense minister over the military threat posed by Beijing and warned they could sabotage friendly relations.

India's defense minister, George Fernandes, said Sunday that China had built a sophisticated electronic surveillance base in Burma's Coco Islands and was upgrading airfields in Tibet to take supersonic fighters capable of striking at In-

dia's borders. Burma denied Mr. Fernandes' statement.

"China expresses utmost regret and resentment," Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said yesterday in China's first official reaction. "China does not pose any threat to neighboring countries."

The comments would "seriously sabotage the favorable atmosphere for developing friendly relations," Mr. Zhu told a news confer-

ence.

India held back comment over China's reaction.

"We have taken note of the Chinese statement," a Foreign Ministry spokesman in New Delhi told reporters. He declined to elaborate.

Mr. Fernandes, a former socialist firebrand whose Samata Party is a key partner in the Hindu nationalist-led ruling coalition, said India had long focused on the threat from Pakistan while ignor-

ing the equal danger posed by China.

Mr. Zhu poured scorn on Mr. Fernandes, using unusually strong language.

"His so-called view that China constitutes the principal threat to India is absolutely ridiculous and not worthy of refutation," Mr. Zhu said.

"His accusation concerning China's relations with relevant countries is utterly fictitious and has no basis in facts," he added.

Beijing-based diplomats said Mr. Zhu's sharp comments represented a warning to India to rein in its outspoken defense minister before he caused more damage.

They said China regarded the accusations as particularly offensive since it had worked hard in recent years to settle border quarrels with all its neighbors, including India.

China fought a brief border war with India in 1962, but relations have now warmed.

"They're puzzled and annoyed at the Indians for coming out with this sort of thing," said one diplomat. "The Chinese have been doing everything they can over the last two or three years to calm the Indians down."

By delivering a "slap on the wrist" to Mr. Fernandes, China was "hoping that his own govern-

ment will call him to order," the diplomat added.

In April, Mr. Fernandes accused China of providing Pakistan missile technology after Islamabad announced it had tested its longest-range missile capable of striking targets deep inside India. Beijing denied the allegation.

On Monday, India's opposition Congress party lashed out at Mr. Fernandes over his remarks.

"The defense minister ... once again made observations about our relations with China which, both in letter and spirit, go against our trying to widen, deepen and strengthen our relations with China," party spokesman Salman Khurshid said in a statement.

Washington Times

May 6, 1998

Pg. 13

Taiwan: Drills to thwart communists

By Jeffrey Parker
REUTERS NEWS AGENCY

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Taiwan said bluntly yesterday its annual military drills were designed to thwart invasion by "communist forces" — a potentially provocative statement before a planned U.S.-China summit in Beijing.

With Taiwan Vice President Lien Chan's departure yesterday for a Latin American journey and a politically sensitive U.S. stopover, Taipei's announcement came at a delicate moment in Washington's changing relationship with Beijing.

Taiwan knows no foe besides communist China and its 3 million-strong People's Liberation Army, which have vowed to invade the Nationalist-ruled island if it makes what Beijing regards as a push for independence.

Washington has diplomatic relations only with Beijing but remains Taiwan's most steadfast friend, maintaining a right to arm the island despite breaking ties 20 years ago.

Taipei generally takes pains to avoid describing military activities in language that might irritate its adversary across the Taiwan Strait — or its benefactor across the Pacific.

Not so in yesterday's statement by Defense Ministry spokesman Kung Fan-ting announcing the May 11-14 "Han Kwang" drills.

"The exercise targets the biggest threat — any possible military actions by the communist forces to invade Taiwan," Mr. Kung was quoted by the official Central News Agency as saying.

Mr. Kung said all three armed

services would join the exercises around Hualien and Taitung along Taiwan's relatively undeveloped eastern coast — the flank that does not face the mainland.

In a departure from recent years, the maneuvers would be closed to the public and media, Mr. Kung said.

With President Clinton due in Beijing for a summit with President and Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin in June, Taiwan is deeply anxious about any Sino-U.S. warming.

Such advances have generally come at Taipei's expense, as when Jimmy Carter severed ties with the exiled Republic of China on Taiwan to recognize Beijing's People's Republic in 1979.

"Coming on the eve of the Clinton-Jiang talks, the announcement could be seen as Taiwan's reiterating its need for defense in the face of the communist threat," said

National Chengchi University political science professor Shaw Chong-hai.

"The message is obviously for both the United States and the mainland," Mr. Shaw added.

Beijing calls Taiwan the most sensitive issue in its ties with Washington and pressured Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright last week to revise U.S. Taiwan policy by cutting the arms flow and explicitly opposing Taiwan's independence.

Taiwan has been estranged from the mainland since a 1949 civil-war split but maintains that it wants eventual reunion with the mainland.

Taipei nonetheless insists reunion is possible only under a mutually acceptable democracy — something that would oblige the Communist Party to abandon its absolute grip on power.

Defense News

May 4-10, 1998

Pg. 2

PLA General Defers U.S. Visit; Cites Health

People's Liberation Army Gen. Jiang Wannian, vice chairman of China's powerful Central Military Commission, will not visit the United States in mid-May

as planned due to health problems, said U.S. and Chinese defense officials.

Jiang was scheduled to spend nearly three weeks in the United States touring military sites, and was scheduled to meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton and senior political and military officials.

Washington
Post

May 6, 1998

Pg. 22

Ex-Zaire Generals Told to Leave Ivory Coast

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast—Ivory Coast has given four generals who served under dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in the former Zaire 72 hours to leave or face expulsion, police sources said.

The four arrived in secret last week under false identities and with the complicity of Ivorian nationals, a source said.

Fighting Subsides In Restive Kosovo

Washington Post May 6, 1998 Pg. 22

Albania Angered by Serb Operations

By Guy Dinmore
Special to the
Washington Post

PONOSEVAC, Yugoslavia, May 5—A three-day gunfight between ethnic Albanian rebels and Serbian police subsided today, leaving this village abandoned and littered with the wreckage of war.

Police showed reporters the battered remains of a troop carrier hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. Four policemen inside had been wounded and taken 45 miles to a hospital in Pristina, the capital of Serbia's southern province of Kosovo.

Ethnic Albanians make up 90 percent of the population in the province. Most ethnic Al-

banians want independence from Serbia, the largest of two republics remaining in Yugoslavia. About 150 people have been killed in Kosovo since February in clashes between Albanian separatists and Serbian security forces.

Houses near where police had set up a checkpoint were pockmarked with bullet holes, and spent cartridges from Albanian-made weapons lay on the ground.

"We were attacked by about 50 terrorists," said one officer using the term Serbians apply to ethnic Albanians. His hand was bandaged from a shrapnel wound. Reports by state-controlled media that 10 rebels had been killed in three days of fighting appeared to be exag-

gerated. Police in Ponosevac could not confirm they had killed anyone.

Ponosevac is less than five miles from the Albanian border in the rugged, mountainous region where Serbian forces are attempting to stem the smuggling of arms to the Kosovo Liberation Army, a separatist guerrilla group.

All the inhabitants of the village, mostly ethnic Albanians and Gypsies, fled their homes. Albanian officials said two villagers were killed in the fighting and a mother and her daughter were wounded.

"It is simple. There will be war," said one plainclothes officer carrying a submachine gun at a police roadblock beyond the nearby town of

Dakovica.

[The Albanian Foreign Ministry today accused the Yugoslav government of carrying out "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo, the Reuters news service reported.

["Even in the past few days Serbian police forces backed by the army and, what is worse, by radical ultranationalist paramilitary troops, are continuing their military operations of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo," the Foreign Ministry statement said. "The violence by police and the military is accompanied by massive bombings and destruction of the population centers, applying in Kosovo the Serbian scorched-earth strategy."]

European Stars & Stripes

May 6, 1998

Pg. 5

Serbian Man Faces Trial In Yugoslavia

BIJELO POLJE, Yugoslavia (AP) —A Serb charged with kidnapping and killing 19 civilians during the Bosnian war — selecting them because of their Muslim names — went on trial Monday in a Yugoslav court.

Nebojsa Ranisavljevic, 34, is charged with taking part in kidnapping the people, mostly Muslims, from a train in February 1993. They were robbed, tortured and executed by a Bosnian Serbian paramilitary

unit. Ranisavljevic denied the charges, saying Monday he was forced to confess. He is formally charged with war crimes against the civilian population. The train started in Serbia and traveled to Montenegro. Bosnian Serbian paramilitary troops stopped it when it passed through a small sliver of Bosnia.

The indictment against Ranisavljevic says the victims, chosen because of their names, were taken deeper into Bosnian

territory, where they were ordered to hand over their money, jewels, watches and other valuables. They later were beaten and taken to a garage, where most were shot. Two tried to escape but were shot as they ran. One was injured and his throat was slit.

Authorities in Serbian-led Yugoslavia never have issued a formal finding on the incident, despite repeated calls by victims' relatives.

The trial is taking place in

Bijelo Polje, a Montenegrin town on the border with Serbia, near the village where the kidnapping took place. Ranisavljevic was arrested in Montenegro in October 1996.

Montenegro, the smaller republic that with Serbia forms Yugoslavia, recently has shown greater interest in cooperating with the war crimes tribunal based in The Hague, Netherlands. Serbia has called the court biased against Serbs.

Baltimore Sun

May 6, 1998

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Envoy to be appointed in Bosnia to push unity

DRVAR, Bosnia — Bosnia's peace coordinator will appoint an international envoy to help promote ethnic reconciliation in a volatile region where ethnic Serbs

were recently forced to flee their homes for a second time.

Carlos Westendorp said the international community would appoint one envoy and Bosnian Croat leaders would nominate a second to try to strengthen links between local authorities and Western officials in the Drvar area.

He also said the Serb Republic's prime minister, Milorad Dodik, had to play his part by allowing Croats to return to the Serb Republic. Only 12 Bosnian Croats and 128 Muslims have returned to the Serb Republic this year, according to the United Nations.

Richmond Times-Dispatch May 6, 1998

Pg. 4

Senate urged to ratify arms control package

WASHINGTON — Citing growing support in Russia for approval of an arms control treaty, President Clinton's national security adviser

urged the Senate to ratify a package of agreements to ban nuclear testing and limit weapons and missile defense systems.

"The future of arms control is now," Sandy Berger said yesterday in a speech to a pro-defense business group. "We must not let this

extraordinary opportunity slip away."

Berger, who leaves for Moscow today to prepare for a meeting next week between Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin, said the administration's goal is to see approval of the pacts by year's end.

Next Time, Expanding NATO Will Be Harder

Many Senators want to pause after Round 1

By Major Garrett
and Thomas Omestad

With far less national debate than was once expected--or perhaps is healthy for such a historic decision--the Senate last week approved adding three countries to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The 80-19 vote to bring Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO was politically painless: Ethnic voters were overwhelmingly in favor, and generic voters ignored squishy cost projections. Even Russia muffled its earlier growling. But the easy first round of NATO expansion will only make the next round harder.

Nine more countries are already pushing to get in. Slovenia, Romania, and the Baltic States (Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania) are thought to be serious contenders. So the United States and its allies now face a quandary: Advancing NATO to the very borders of Russia would deeply antagonize the Russian government and people; but stopping the expansion process now, leaving the Baltics and much of Eastern Europe out in the cold, would demonstratively surrender those countries to Russia's sphere of influence.

It's no surprise, then, that many people in Washington want to put off the decision. Nearly as important as last week's vote to ratify enlargement was the Senate's 59-41 rejection of an amendment by Republican Sen. John Warner of Virginia that would have prevented any more additions to NATO for three years. Twenty-two senators who supported the first round of expansion backed Warner, signaling intense misgivings about the next round. While the door formally remains open to new members, Sen. Joseph Biden, a Delaware Democrat, said the prevailing approach in the Senate is to see "how this is working first. . . . There's no big rush."

One major unresolved

question about NATO expansion is its cost. As the Senate debate revealed, no one knows how much U.S. taxpayers will have to pay: Estimates for this round ranged from \$400 million over 10 years to \$19 billion over 15 years.

Russia has officially opposed any expansion of NATO, but its reaction was muted--this time. Russian President Boris Yeltsin has most vociferously opposed NATO inclusion of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, which were occupied by the Soviet Union from before World War II until 1991. Russia's response to "losing" the Baltics could be to withhold cooperation on arms control and such issues as sanctions on Iraq and curbing the sale of missile technology to Iran.

Conservatives in Moscow have already delayed the ratification of the START II nuclear arms reduction treaty, partly out of anger at NATO expansion, even though Russia cannot afford to maintain its current, vast stockpile of nuclear weapons. Russian military thinkers say that NATO expansion will encourage the Kremlin to place greater reliance on nuclear weapons, including those loaded onto shorter-range tactical missiles. That kind of backsliding could become especially risky in the case of the Baltics because, Western military analysts say, NATO could only make its security guarantee to them credible by positioning nuclear weapons there--right on Russia's borders. It is this kind of scenario that has prompted Democratic Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York to warn that pursuing NATO expansion over Russian objections could increase the chances of nuclear war.

While the Senate and the Clinton administration appear eager to let the dust settle, the nations that did not make the first cut will now push aggressively to join NATO--and sooner rather than later. "It's already started," said Sen. Robert Smith, a New Hampshire

Republican who was one of the earliest opponents of NATO expansion. "What we have done with this vote is to create in the next 10 to 15 years chaos in Europe in terms of arguing who should come in and why they should come in."

Nineteen U.S. ethnic groups, under the banner of the Central and East European Coalition, bombarded the Senate with letters and phone calls on behalf of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. The same coalition will be back to push for another round of expansion next year, lobbying Clinton to make good on his promise that the "first new members should not and will not be the last." "We've promised to help them just like they've helped us," says Myra Lenard, who heads the Washington office of the Polish American Congress.

By next April, when NATO meets in Washington, NATO's nine new suitors will be lobbying in high gear. Romania, a country of 23 million, will argue that it can serve as a bul-

wark against instability from the nearby former Yugoslavia and provide strategically important access to the Black Sea.

France, Romania's patron in Western Europe, is backing its bid. Slovenia, an independent republic of the former Yugoslavia, has Italy's support and will stress that it provides a land bridge from Italy to Hungary, which would otherwise have no border with any other NATO country. Slovenia is also planning to send mine-sweeping specialists to Bosnia, where a NATO-led peacekeeping force is patrolling.

All of the would-be entrants see NATO as protection against Moscow. But Warner and other opponents of NATO expansion fear that it will pit the fragile economies of Central Europe against one another. All of them are trying to attract Western capital, and investors are likely to see NATO membership as a guarantee of basic stability. "It's like having the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.," Warner said, comparing NATO military might to federal protection for deposits in some banks. "Suddenly the other nations are going to realize that we have built into this thing a friction between the haves and have-nots."

Washington Post May 6, 1998 Pg. 19

No Way Out For Kosovo

By Richard Cohen

ISTANBUL—He was a nicely dressed man with a rather impressive business card. It said he was both an MD and a PhD and, more to the point, the prime minister of the "Republic of Kosova," a country that does not exist and which, if most of the nations in the world have anything to do about it, never will. Many Kosovars, however, feel differently.

There will be a war, Prime Minister Bujar Bukoshi said. Arms, many of them no more than rifles but some automatic weapons as well, were being smuggled over the rugged border from Albania.

"Many people will die," I said.

Bukoshi nodded.

Already, of course, people have died in Kosovo -- about 100, many of them civilians, in the past two months. The province, ruled by Serbia but 90 percent ethnic Albanian, is a tragedy waiting to happen. The Serbs, who administer with their usual light touch, vow never to grant Kosovo independence nor return it to the autonomous status it had until 1989, when Slobodan Milosevic, the Serb leader, simply incorporated it into his own country.

The Balkans are a nest of clichés and myths -- and Kosovo is where all of them seem true. To start with, you have to understand that its emotional and historic importance to Serbs goes back to the Battle of Kosovo in 1488, which the Serbs and other

Christians lost to the Ottoman Turks. This is a long time to hold a grudge, but that, it seems, is what is done best in the Balkans.

If there is an easy way out of this dilemma, no one sees it. I spent two days asking foreign policy experts assembled here for a meeting of the New Atlantic Initiative what they would do about Kosovo. No one seemed to know. Ethnic Albanians such as Bukoshi are on the record demanding independence while the Serbs, for their part, are insisting that everyone butt out. In the meantime, the Yugoslav army, the police and paramilitary groups have been accused of responding to provocations with the occasional massacre and murder of civilians.

The truth is that it is the brutality that draws the attention of the world and, of

course, the news media. It just could be that ethnic Albanian leaders think that history -- recent history, that is -- will repeat itself: Awful stuff on American TV will prompt the United States and its NATO allies to take action. If this is what they are thinking, I have two words of caution for them: Monica Lewinsky.

The present scandal has reduced the usually timid Clinton administration to near paralysis. It will do nothing to endanger its high poll ratings since, in the future, the very fate of the president may be decided by Congress. Popular presidents do not get impeached; presidents who send American troops to die in places with unpronounceable names do not stay popular. It is that simple -- and the kind of cynicism that any Balkan could

appreciate.

For the United States, there are no easy choices. It already has troops on the ground in the Balkans -- Bosnia and Macedonia -- and its Air Force supplies much of the punch that makes the NATO air operation so formidable. With a toe already in the Balkans, it's hard to see how Washington could just sit by if the Serbs, as they did in Bosnia, became homicidal maniacs. A little carnage on CNN goes a long way.

The Bosnian war of 1992 to 1995 was triggered by Milosevic. But the West did its part -- fumbling diplomatically, talking loudly at times but mostly acting timidly until even those of us who feared a U.S. involvement could stomach no more. It was, in the end, force that got the parties to sit down at Dayton.

Secretary of State

Madeleine Albright had vowed that the mistakes of Bosnia will not be duplicated. But the Russians are in their usual pro-Serb swoon, and much of the rest of Europe -- except Germany, which has a large Albanian community -- would just prefer to look away.

History is repeating itself. The Germans confirm that arms are being smuggled into Kosovo, some of them apparently paid for by the Albanian community in Germany. The Kosovo Liberation Army -- terrorists to the Serbs, patriots to the ethnic Albanians -- will continue to draw Serb blood, and NATO, as is its custom, will meet, denounce, impose sanctions (as was just done) but avoid taking the sort of action -- the threat of force -- that will avoid the Balkan war everyone can see coming.

Ft. Worth Star-Telegram

May 5, 1998

The Tomb

The families of Capt. Rodney L. Strobbridge and 1st Lt. Michael J. Blassie -- either of whom, missing and presumed dead in Vietnam in May 1972, 'may' be buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery -- surely have a right to know if their loved one's remains are indeed there.

Part of the compact between American citizens and their government has been that every effort is made to bring citizen-soldiers home, or at least to mark their graves when they are killed serving the nation. The elapse of 26 years does not dim that.

So Defense Secretary William Cohen should agree to the opening of the tomb for scientific testing of these remains.

The episode has suddenly made the nation conscious of the

Tomb of the Unknowns, which began as merely the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at a time when there had been only one world war and fewer opportunities for Americans to be killed in action overseas. Its existence reminds us that in all wars there are unknown dead (more, probably, in the Civil War than in all of our other conflicts combined).

The Tomb of the Unknowns holds, or should hold, a special place in Americans' hearts, standing as it does for all the "unknowns" to whom we owe so much. Opening it for a humane purpose does not change that, but it does make us realize that technology has now made it possible to identify previously unidentifiable remains.

We can only hope, even as this tomb continues to honor the dead of four wars in this century, that other kinds of technological advances, along with a firmer resolve for peace, will render identification of the dead a moot point for the future.

Washington Times

May 6, 1998

Pg. 7

Inside Politics

Compiled by Greg Pierce

Behind the leak

Judicial Watch is zeroing in on whether the White House was behind the illegal leak of information from Linda Tripp's government personnel file, writes Dick Morris, the former political adviser to President Clinton.

Clifford Bernath, a public relations officer at the Pentagon, admits that he told New Yorker reporter Jane Mayer about Mrs. Tripp's failure to mention on her security forms a brush with the law as a teen-ager.

However, Mr. Bernath says he was acting under orders from his boss, chief Pentagon spokesman

Ken Bacon.

"Ken Bacon's background indicates that he's a man the White House can turn to. He's the one who hired former White House intern Monica Lewinsky when the White House needed to move her out of Clinton's range but still keep her on the reservation," Mr. Morris noted in a column in the New York Post.

Judicial Watch, which is investigating how FBI files on hundreds of Republicans ended up at the White House in the early years of this administration, is expected to subpoena Mr. Bernath.

"If he doesn't take the fall, we may learn that Bacon checked with people upstairs at the Pentagon or across the river at the White House," Mr. Morris said.

Baltimore Sun

May 6, 1998

Pg. 13

Liberian soldiers riot over back pay, benefits

MONROVIA, Liberia — Hundreds of demobilized or retired soldiers demanding back pay and other benefits rioted yesterday in Liberia's capital, Monrovia, and security forces fired into the air to disperse them, witnesses said.

The former soldiers say President Charles Taylor had sanctioned the payments but government officials had misappropriated them. Officials deny the allegation.

Costello Seeks To Stop Shipment Of Hazardous Waste To Sauget

He says it should be burned on Pacific island

By Bill Lambrecht
Post-Dispatch
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON A plan by the Army to ship hazardous materials from a Pacific island to an incinerator in Sauget may need to outmaneuver a blockade in Congress.

Rep. Jerry Costello, D-Belleville, said Monday that he had asked the Environmental Protection Agency to withhold permission for the Army to begin loading containers for a 6,000-mile voyage to Trade Waste Incineration, a privately run operation in the Metro East area.

"This is not something we are going to let die," he said, noting that he was arranging

opposition in Congress.

Johnston Island, 850 miles southwest of Hawaii, is a repository for old nerve gas weapons. The 60,000 gallons of liquid waste comes from rinsing containers; it includes mercury, arsenic and other heavy-metal contamination along with trace amounts of nerve agents, according to the Army's tests.

The Army contends that it can't destroy the waste in its own \$200 million incinerator on Johnston Island because it costs too much to operate and also because it doesn't have the appropriate federal permit. The plan calls for sending the waste by barge to Hawaii, from there by container ship to Long Beach, Calif., and then by rail to the Midwest.

Costello, whose district includes Sauget, said he doesn't buy the Army's reasoning.

"The Army may be right when they say their plan is the most cost-efficient," he said. "But when you consider the health and safety aspects of sending wastes halfway around the world, it makes no sense."

Costello said he would ask the EPA to grant any necessary burning permit at Johnston Island so that the shipments might be avoided.

St. Clair County officials said that they wanted to know more before taking a stand on the hazardous waste shipments.

"I am concerned, but I don't know what it is," said County Board Chairman John Baricevic. "I'm still in the process of trying to gather informa-

tion."

The County Board's environmental committee chairman, Wade H. Brunsmann, D-Belleville, agreed.

"It does cause me concern, but I've got to know more about it," he said.

Brunsmann said he planned to meet with the plant manager at Trade Waste Incineration. The company has a reputation as a safe and reputable disposer of hazardous materials, he said.

Even so, "somebody needs to explain to me what they're going to do with it and how they're going to do it," he said. "I'm going to have to have an answer for the people of St. Clair County."

Robert Goodrich of The Post-Dispatch contributed to this story.

Wilmington (NC) Morning Star

May 2, 1998

Pg. 5B

Pentagon Calls Lejeune Marine Corps' Top Base

By Misti C. Lee
Star-News Correspondent

WASHINGTON - Camp Lejeune's teamwork with the local community and innovative management programs were touted Friday during a Pentagon ceremony honoring the base as tops in the Marine Corps.

Maj. Gen. Ray Smith received the Commander In Chief's Award for Installation Excellence during a formal ceremony in an auditorium at the Pentagon.

Maj. Gen. Smith and about 75 guests, including Camp Lejeune officials and local government and business leaders from Onslow County, flew to the Pentagon Friday to receive the award.

"I have over 30 years in the Marine Corps, and the favorite place of my family was Camp Lejeune and North Carolina for lots of reasons," Brig. Gen. Mike Hayes, deputy director of logistics and facilities for the Marine Corps, said after the ceremony. "We have strong, strong feelings of affection for North Carolina and Camp Le-

jeune . . . It is truly the show-place of the Marine Corps." Camp Lejeune, which also won the award in 1987 and 1992, was the only repeat winner Friday.

Maj. Gen. Smith named many of the local communities - Jacksonville, Sneads Ferry, Richlands and Swansboro - and said he accepted the award in their names. He thanked them for making the Marine Corps welcome in their area.

"It's not just something you say," Maj. Gen. Smith said after the ceremony. "It really is great support. It helps you in all kinds of ways. I've served on bases where you're not welcome."

The award highlighted Camp Lejeune's innovative management and office automation as well as its health and family service programs. Last year, the base began several programs to help military spouses find work, as well as programs to help Marines leaving the Corps to find jobs. More than 500 exiting Marines were offered jobs during two job fairs on the base last year, which was attended by more

than 100 employers nationwide, said Lynn Ritter, assistant chief of staff for human services.

A team from Camp Lejeune spent three months on its application package, which included details of the base's ability to recover from \$ 56 million in damages from Hurricanes Fran and Bertha in 1996, said Debbie Martin, operations officer for the Management Support Department.

Along with a 2-foot-wide wooden trophy with bronze plaques, the base received \$ 200,000 and a nomination for a Meritorious Unit Commendation.

High on Maj. Gen. Smith's list for using the money is a plan to write a history of Camp Lejeune. Construction for the base began in 1941 along the New River, beginning with a converted tobacco barn, a summer cottage and mud trails.

Durham (NC) Herald Sun May 2, 1998 Pg. 6

Joint Chiefs Chairman To Address NCSU Grads

By J. Cameron Tew
The Herald-Sun

RALEIGH -- The highest ranking military officer in the land will return to N.C. State University this month to speak during commencement at his alma mater.

Gen. Henry Hugh Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a 1963 graduate of NCSU, will deliver the university's commencement address May 16 at Carter-Finley Stadium.

Shelton, 56, who became the 14th chairman of the Joint

Chiefs in October, is a native of Speed, N.C., near Tarboro and earned his NCSU degree in textile engineering. He succeeded Gen. John Shalikashvili, who retired.

A decorated combat veteran of the Vietnam War, Shelton is the first member of the elite Army Special Forces -- the Green Berets -- to rise to the nation's top military post.

He is the main military adviser to President Clinton, the secretary of defense and the National Security Council. Before his appointment, he served as commander in chief of the

U.S. Special Operations Command, which oversees the Green Berets and the Navy Seals.

In June, when Clinton nominated Shelton for the post, he called the four-star general "a decorated soldier, an innovative thinker, a superb commander."

Shelton earned his commission through the Reserve Offi-

cers Training Corps at NCSU and later joined the Army, becoming a platoon leader at Fort Benning, Ga.

During his first two decades of military service, he held many command and staff positions in the United States and Vietnam. He served two tours in Vietnam, first with the 5th Special Forces Group, then with the 173rd Airborne Bri-

gade.

In 1987, he became a brigadier general and served in the Operations Directorate of the Joint Staff. Two years later, he was named assistant division commander for operations of the 101st Airborne Division -- a tour that included a seven-month deployment to Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War. During the 1990s, Shelton

served mainly at Fort Bragg, being promoted to major general in 1991 and placed in command of the 82nd Airborne Division.

Two years later, he was promoted to lieutenant general and named commander of the 18th Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg. In 1994, he commanded the Operation Uphold Democracy joint task force in Haiti.

Blast On Tanker Forces Captain To Sacrifice Crew

London Times

May 6, 1998

From Rachel Bridge
in Sydney

THE commander of the Australian Navy's largest ship yesterday took the decision to save the rest of his crew by sealing four sailors in the blazing engine room, consigning them to certain death, after rescuers were beaten back by the flames.

A woman sailor and three male crewmen were trapped in the engine room as an explosion ripped through the HMAS Westralia, a British-built fuel supply tanker which had served with the Royal Navy during the Falklands conflict.

Faced with the prospect of the fire igniting 20,000 tonnes of diesel fuel on board, the commanding officer, Stuart Dietrich, abandoned rescue attempts and sealed the engine

room, leaving the four to the flames.

Another five sailors were injured in the ten-minute rescue attempt before the engine room was sealed and the area flooded with carbon dioxide, ending the meagre hope for the trapped crew but bringing the blaze under control in 90 minutes.

Nine crew members were airlifted to hospital in Perth suffering from burns and smoke inhalation.

Commodore Geoff Walpole, the navy's Chief of Staff, said that Commander Dietrich - who was awarded the Conspicuous Service Medal in 1996 - had no choice because the rest of the ship and her crew were in danger.

The 40,000-tonne fuel tanker, which was taking part in exercises near Rottneest Island off the west coast of Australia before heading for Indo-

nesia, was bought by Australia from the Royal Navy in 1994.

Last year she helped in the rescue of the British sailor Tony Bullimore when his boat capsized during the Vendée Globe yacht race in the Southern Ocean.

She spent ten years from 1979 in the Royal Navy as RFA Appleleaf, and was used for the long-distance refuelling of ships and and both refuelled and carried helicopters during the Falklands war.

After that she was leased to Australia in 1989 - and was a key part of the country's contingent sent to the Gulf War in 1990-91.

Commander Alan Johnston, Commanding Officer of the Stirling Naval Base, said: "Search parties were sent back into the inferno of the engine room but were beaten back. It

was a command decision to drench the engine room with carbon dioxide."

The explosion is Australia's worst naval accident since 1964, when the aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne sliced through the destroyer HMAS Voyager, killing 82 men.

The Australian Government yesterday promised to conduct a complete investigation and said it would take action if there were any sign of negligence. John Howard, the Prime Minister, said: "It is a particularly tragic incident, and I know I speak for all Australians in expressing our sympathy."

HMAS Westralia has now been towed back to Fremantle in Western Australia. The dead crew members, who were aged between 22 and 29, were all based in Western Australia.

Pacific Stars & Stripes

May 7, 1998

Pg. 3

U.S., Thai troops gear up for Cobra Gold

BY RICH ROESLER

Striper Staff Writer

Humvees, howitzer rounds and hundreds of tons of other military supplies will be landing on Thai shores next week as five ships unload their cargo for the 10,000-troop Cobra Gold military exercises in Thailand.

Three ships from the Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron 3, based in Guam and Saipan, arrived off the Thai coast Monday, squadron commander Commodore Fred Bertsch said in a phone interview from Thailand on Tuesday. The three ships are carrying battle equipment, such as amphibious vehicles, and more than 150,000 gallons of motor vehicle fuel, for the exercise.

The MPS vessels arrived on the heels

of two U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command cargo ships, which unloaded field equipment, cots, generators, tents and other supplies for advance parties of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force, an Okinawa unit that's a key player in the war games.

The two ships, the USNS Cape Inscription and USNS Strong Virginia, are also dropping off gear and supplies for the Army's forces participating in the exercise. "We're keeping everyone in guns and butter," said Bertsch. "We have generators, we have water buffaloes (water tanks on wheels), we have tracked vehicles, heavy dirt-moving vehicles."

More than 10,000 U.S. troops from all four armed services are taking part in the annual combat exercises alongside

6,200 Thai troops. Despite Thailand contributing 10,000 fewer troops than last year due to its economic straits, Cobra Gold is one of the largest exercises in the U.S. Pacific Command this year. The exercise will stretch from May 18 to June 2.

At the Thai port of Thung Prong, south of Bangkok, the Cape Inscription recently unloaded 11 shipping containers of ammunition, ranging from small-arms shells to large howitzer shells, said Lt. Cmdr. Tony Vraa, commander of MSC's Okinawa office. Soon, the Motor Vessel 1st Lt. Jack Lammus will unload fuel at the same port, Bertsch said.

Most of the gear and supplies will come off the ships at Chuk Sarnet harbor. On Tuesday, the Motor Vessel 1st Lt.

Baldomero Lopez and the crane ship SS Gopher State were preparing to unload the equipment. Since the harbor is relatively shallow, the gear will be put on barge ferries about four miles out to sea and floated in, where the Gopher State's crane will pick up the equipment and set it on land, Bertsch said.

The two ships will be joined by the Lummus, the squadron flagship, once it

finishes offloading its fuel.

The Maritime Prepositioning Ships are essentially floating warehouses full of ready-to-go combat equipment. They'll be dropping off 190 pieces of equipment, Bertsch said. The squadron is capable of supporting 17,000 Marines.

The MPS vessels will also do crane demonstrations and participate in security exercises with a harbor guard

group whose job is to protect port facilities from infiltrators, such as divers trying to attach limpet mines to the cargo ships.

The MPS ships will load up again in June, heading back to Okinawa and then home to Guam and Saipan, Bertsch said. The Military Sealift Command cargo ships will load up after that.

Wall Street Journal May 6, 1998

Split Personality: As Iran Softens, Capital Divides On Where To Go

CAPITAL JOURNAL

By Gerald F. Seib

The U.S. and Iran have a history so tortured that it makes the relationship between Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich look simple by comparison.

But two things are becoming clear. First, U.S.-Iranian relations will be one of the paramount foreign-policy issues of the next few years. And second, Washington is splintering into rival camps on the question of where to go. Precisely at the time when a new approach is needed, paralysis may be the result.

America's deep ambivalence has been on graphic display in recent days. First, Rep. Lee Hamilton, the level-headed dean of congressional foreign-policy thinkers, gave a long speech arguing that the time has come to begin a "policy of engagement" with Iran. Only by talking to Iran, the Indiana Democrat argued, can the U.S. explore and encourage the signs that Iran finally wants to end its estrangement from the West. "The challenge is to find ways to begin talking with Iran, without preconditions, so that we can begin to address the many issues that divide us," he said. "If we do not talk, we can assume that the current, unacceptable impasse will continue."

That speech -- undercovered by the press but noted in the White House -- was followed within days by a shot fired in the opposite direction. The State Department released its annual report on terrorism, in which Iran looks as retrograde as ever. "Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 1997," the report states flatly. It "continued to

fund and train known terrorist groups" and conducted at least 13 assassinations abroad. That report, in turn, was followed by a briefing for journalists in which intelligence officials gave a softer interpretation of Iran's attitude toward terrorism.

Taken together, these conflicting developments frame the fundamental question about Iran. Should U.S. policy be based on what Iran has done in the past or on what it might be moving toward in the future?

The answer matters. In the two decades that Americans have demonized Iran, that nation has, if anything, grown in strategic importance. It remains the Persian Gulf's most populous nation and second largest oil producer. As U.S. relations with neighboring Iraq remain at rock bottom, the case for civil relations with Iran grows.

To grasp Iran's new importance, though, look at a map. Iran adjoins not only Iraq and the Persian Gulf, but also the Caspian Sea, home of the world's most tantalizing untapped oil and gas reserves. The Caspian region contains potential oil reserves of up to 200 billion barrels. The demise of the Soviet Union has opened up this pot of gold to the outside world. Current U.S. policy consists largely of encouraging construction of pipelines to export this oil and gas along routes skirting Iran. But ultimately, there is no avoiding the fact that Iran is the big kid on this block.

Which is just one reason why Rep. Hamilton's plea for a new approach makes sense. In his speech to the Council on Foreign Relations, and in a subsequent interview, he makes a simple but profound argument: Whatever its past merits,

the policy of ostracizing Iran isn't getting America anywhere today. It has begun isolating the U.S., not Iran.

Iran has a new president, Mohammed Khatemi, who now has spent a year preaching moderation. Rep. Hamilton argues for a response. He would start by sending messages of openness to Iran's people, perhaps including one by President Clinton, via radio or TV broadcasts. He would license U.S. companies to begin business negotiations in Iran. Finally, instead of merely publicly reiterating American concerns about terrorism, weapons proliferation and Middle East peace, he would start talking about them directly to Iran.

Standing in the way is an ill-conceived law called the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, which compels the president to im-

pose economic sanctions on foreign companies that invest in Iran's energy sector. Rep. Hamilton voted for that act, but now, as he approaches retirement at the end of the year, calls his vote a mistake. He urges Mr. Clinton to use the law's loophole allowing him to waive sanctions in the name of U.S. national interest.

Caution is, of course, still in order. Rep. Hamilton notes correctly. But Iran is embarked on a historic internal struggle between those open to the West and those openly hostile to the West. The U.S. can observe this struggle, or try to influence it. "The State Department report says they're the No. 1 terrorist nation," Rep. Hamilton says. "I don't dispute that. The question is what are you going to do about that."

Austin American-Statesman May 6, 1998

UT's Mark: High Calling

Defense duty would be curbing nuclear weapons

By Dick Stanley
American-Statesman Staff

Although he'll be 69 in June, Hans Mark isn't thinking about retirement.

Instead, the University of Texas engineering professor is pondering such issues as the ability of spy satellites and other options to impede the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mark, a former secretary of the Air Force, will get to try out some of these ideas if the U.S. Senate confirms him later this year as chief technical adviser to Secretary of Defense William Cohen.

President Clinton on Monday announced his intention to nominate Mark as director of defense research and engineering, or chief technical adviser, a \$135,000-a-year post.

Mark, who came to Austin

in 1984 and served as chancellor of the UT System until 1992, already has the support of U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas.

"I know of no one in America better qualified," Gramm said Tuesday. "I strongly support him and congratulate the president and secretary of defense on a superb nomination."

U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Austin, said Mark's "excellent service at UT will be missed, but I expect it is that excellent service which will be quickly recognized by the Senate and enable him to serve our country."

Mark said he and his wife, Marion, planned to maintain their home in West Austin while he commutes to Washington, D.C. He said he would retain his UT faculty position but relinquish his teaching and research duties and UT salary

of \$120,000.

"We're not native Texans, but we got here as soon as we could," said Mark, who was born in Germany, raised in Austria and immigrated to the United States when he was 16.

"This is a political appointment, so it's really only for two years," he said. "I'll be on a leave of absence from the university, and I expect, because we have so many military installations in Texas, that I'll spend a lot of time here."

UT President Larry Faulkner said Mark's nomination reflected well on the university, adding that Mark "is a man of very extensive experience with respect to military research and development."

Mark, a former deputy administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Ad-

ministration, has focused his professional life on nuclear weapons, space probes, spy satellites and military aircraft.

"I was in the nuclear business from the very beginning, so I know the game from the design stage up," Mark said, referring to his work in the 1950s at the Lawrence Livermore Radiation Laboratory at the University of California.

He joined the lab after receiving his doctorate in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. If the Senate confirms him for the defense post, Mark will be the fourth veteran of the Livermore weapons lab to hold the job.

Mark said the primary focus of the Defense Research and Engineering office, which has a budget of almost \$7 billion, will be on dismantling and

controlling the nation's nuclear stockpile, while finding technical means of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

"Technical means of verification," a euphemism for spy satellites and high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft, was the central feature of arms control agreements between the United States and the former Soviet Union.

The SALT II agreement -- for Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty -- began when Mark was director of the ultra-secret National Reconnaissance Office from 1977 to 1979.

Although SALT II collapsed when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, it spurred the reconnaissance office's renewal of spy satellite technology -- under

Mark's direction -- that still is in use today.

In a closed Washington ceremony last fall, Mark received a government medal for his work with the reconnaissance office, which works closely with the Central Intelligence Agency.

"Hans is an awesome scientist and administrator," said physicist Harry Fair, director of UT's Institute for Advanced Technology, an Army-financed lab where Mark plans to step down as a senior adviser.

Fair, a longtime researcher with the government's former Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency before coming to UT, said the defense job for which Mark will be nominated "is crying for somebody with his kind of talent and leadership."

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

May 6, 1998

Pg. B2

Coast Guard may go to Everett

By ED OFFLEY
PI MILITARY REPORTER

Navy and Coast Guard officials in the Puget Sound region are studying a proposal to relocate the Coast Guard's base at Pier 36 in Seattle to the Everett Naval Station sometime after 2000, the commander of Navy Base Seattle said yesterday.

The possible move of five Coast Guard vessels, several major shore units and about 1,200 personnel to Everett is tied to a Navy review of aircraft carrier home port assignments, said Rear Adm. Bill Center, who manages Navy shore commands in the Northwest.

"They are doing engineering studies right now to see the cost of moving" to Everett, Center told the Post-Intelligencer editorial board. Center emphasized the Coast Guard relocation is being studied as a contingency option should the Navy decide to transfer the carrier USS Abraham Lincoln from Everett to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton.

On a related subject, Center acknowledged the Navy's responsibility for several major fuel spills at the shipyard recently. He said he and his

staff are working hard to cooperate with the state Department of Ecology, which criticized the shipyard for refusing to allow inspectors access to one spill site.

The Pacific Fleet for several years has been reviewing its current aircraft carrier basing scheme, which assigns the USS Carl Vinson to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and the Lincoln and six escort warships to Everett.

Center said a draft environmental impact statement to be released in July will recommend the Lincoln remain in Everett at least until 2001, but one option under that report will consider basing both carriers at Bremerton beginning in 2001.

The rationale for shifting the Lincoln out of Everett stems from Navy maintenance schedules that call for a six-month overhaul of nuclear carriers every two years, and personnel policies aimed at minimizing the disruption to crew family life by prolonged separation.

The Lincoln is scheduled to enter the shipyard for a six-month overhaul in 1999. Center said Navy officials plan to study the costs to its crew of 3,000 from having to commute to Everett each workday.

Meanwhile, the Navy has given high priority to building an \$81 million carrier pier at the shipyard that could accommodate both ships when completed in 2003.

Everett opened as home port for the Abraham Lincoln and six escort ships in 1994 only after narrowly surviving closure the year before. The Base Realignment and Closure Commission appointed by Congress voted 4-3 during its 1993 round of base closings to keep the station open.

Center acknowledged Everett would be vulnerable to calls for shutting it down if the Navy opts to transfer the Lincoln to Bremerton.

Center said he and 13th Coast Guard District Commandant Rear Adm. David Spade began discussions on a possible move to Everett several weeks ago. A team of Coast Guard engineers has begun a survey of the Navy base.

"We'd want to make it a joint (Navy-Coast Guard) base," Center said of the plan.

The Navy would be expected to retain its current inventory of six frigates and destroyers at the Everett base.

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